

uses force, we have a chance to intervene. If it is an emergency situation, that is different; he has to act as Commander in Chief.

But we have had ample opportunity to consider this Kosovo issue. And it is on the back burner now. But if it reappears, I will reactivate my resolution.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I again commend our colleague. I thank him for recalling the history of the 1991 debate. I recall it well because I was one of the floor managers. It was legislation that I had drawn up in accordance with the directions of Senator Dole, then-leader. We had a vigorous debate for some 3 days, and it is interesting. There we had in place a half million men and women in the Armed Forces. We had seen the most atrocious form of aggression by Saddam Hussein down through the gulf region, primarily Kuwait. Yet, that debate took 3 days. And by only a mere margin of five votes did the Senate of the United States express its approval for the President of the United States, in the role as Commander in Chief, to use force in that situation.

I thank the Chair. I thank my colleague.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Members permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

RECOGNIZING THE TUKWILA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S "NEW FRIENDS & FAMILIES" PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, today I recognize the Tukwila School District from my home state of Washington and the district's "New Friends & Families" program.

The Tukwila School District has seen its ethnic diversity grow by more than 1,000 percent in the last seven years. Out of the district's 2,500 pupils, 50% are students of color, 20% are enrolled in bilingual education, and all told, they speak about 30 different languages. To meet the challenge of integrating this immigrant population into the school system and the community, the Tukwila School District, the City of Tukwila, and the local Rotary Club created "New Friends & Families." It is a one-night, once a year program designed to engage these hard-to-reach immigrant and refugee students and their families to make them aware of community services and to encourage parental involvement in their children's education.

Clearly, when more than 20% of Tukwila's students are unfamiliar with their new surroundings, they face a se-

rious impediment to quality learning. The "New Friends & Families" program has met this challenge head on with local creativity, local initiative, and local resources. This shows that local communities know best how to deal with unique local problems. By teaming up with local government and local businesses, the school district has found innovative ways to turn its challenges into successful education.

It is programs like "New Friends & Families" that illustrate that local innovation works in our schools. The answer to improving our local schools is not more intrusion and red tape from Washington, DC bureaucracies but rather, more freedom and more flexibility for local educators to use federal resources to meet the unique needs of each community in teaching our kids. During last week's recess, I visited Foster High School in the Tukwila District and presented my first "Innovation in Education Award" to Superintendent Michael Silver in recognition of the creative work he and his district have accomplished through "New Friends & Families."

To recognize the importance of local communities in educating our children, I will be presenting this "Innovation in Education Award" once a week to recognize individuals, schools, and educational programs in Washington state that demonstrate the importance of local control in education. I will also take to the floor of the Senate every week to share with my colleagues these examples of locally driven successes in education in an effort to remind all of us working here in Washington, DC that local communities really do know best.

For the past 35 years, Washington, DC's response to crises in public education has been to create one new program after another—systematically increasing the federal role in classrooms across the country. While the federal government has a role in targeting resources to needy populations and in holding schools accountable for results, it should not tie the hands of districts like Tukwila. That only serves to stifle the local innovation that is fundamental to educational success. I have long been an advocate of local control in education and I plan to introduce legislation this spring that will transfer more control from federal agencies back to local educators where it belongs.

(The remarks of Mr. JEFFORDS and Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 445 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF '96

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 is another year older and another year stronger. As Congress recognizes the third anniversary this month, it now becomes appropriate to reflect on some of the

Act's goals and on some of its accomplishments.

First, let me remind my colleagues that the Telecommunications Act was 10 years in the making. It took time for Congress to understand exactly what was needed to reach consensus and balance among all sectors of the industry and to update America's telecommunications public policy. Congress took a deliberate path to make sure that, at the end of the day, consumers would have new and real choices. Time is still needed before passing final judgment, but clearly the Act has produced positive, tangible results.

I am proud to say that I worked closely with Senator Pressler, then the Chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator STEVENS, Senator HOLLINGS, and others on the act. It took time, it took patience, it took compromise. But in the end, the act boldly embodied Congress' vision for competition and for choice. More choices and better choices in a new age of communication.

When the act was drafted, a number of delicate balances were struck to transform our monopolistic market into many competitive ones. The bottom line for Congress was based on a simple principle: consumers benefit from competition. As simple as this sounds, creating competition in the local telephone market is a fairly complicated process. Competitive carriers require things like collocation, dialing parity and unbundled network elements. Congress knew it would not be easy. That is why the act was structured to provide a centerpiece, a set of instructions on ways for opening the local markets to force competition.

Mr. President, the act is working. Americans are beginning to see the fruits of the seeds sown three years ago.

Many critics point to the lack of local competition or the absence of incumbent local carriers in long distance as the only way to measure or grade the bill. This is wrong. Consumer choices, new choices, and new technologies are the true tests of success.

As far as local competition goes, several state public utility commissions are working closely and collaboratively with incumbents and new entrants. A multitude of competitors have gained authority to provide local telephone service. This choice is a reality for businesses nationwide, and it will be a reality for residents too—not just for basic dial tone but for advanced services such as broadband access to the Internet. It takes significant capital and commitment to build the necessary infrastructure, but numerous companies and Wall Street are answering the challenge by investing billions of dollars to build this foundation for competition. This level of resource deployment does not happen overnight, but it is happening, and in ways Congress intended—with cable television companies revamping their